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COMBAT INSIGNIA STAMPS *OF THE* UNITED STATES ARMY & NAVY AIR CORPS



VOL. I

50 ISSUES

AN ORIGINAL "POSTAMP" SERIES

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The Spirit of the Corps

Late in the summer of 1914, when the green-gray hordes of Imperial Germany swept into Belgium, military aviation was both haphazard and speculative. Improvised units, however, were quickly formed by the French and British Army Commands, and experimental reconnaissance was effected in the air. Germany had already adapted principles of aero navigation from American technicians and engineers; built the first Fokker war planes and placed armed pilots in them.

To meet this formidable array in kind, a number of French single-seater bi-planes, fragile, awkward and difficult to maneuver by the pattern of today, were grouped into combat units. With the formation of the Lafayette Esquadron, composed chiefly of American and French volunteer flyers, a manual of aero tactics was developed to treat the subject of air fighting, along with liaison and observation operations.

In the Spring of 1917, shortly following America's entry into World War No. 1, an aero squadron was formed entirely of American pilots recruited from the Lafayette Esquadron. The first combat insignia known to have been used by a subordinate unit within the corps was that of the profile of an Indian head designed to signify the cunning and fortitude of the first American, the Red Man. All units of the 103rd Aero Squadron used the Indian Head insignia until Ace Captain Eddie Rickenbacher was placed in command of the newly formed 97th, or "Hat in the Ring" Squadron, so called because it employed a design showing Uncle Sam's hat within a circle to paraphrase a well known political captain, and to commemorate America's entry into the War.

The use of corps insignia was originated through the necessity of distinguishing planes at times of poor visibility. Later, it developed that pride in organization, or the Spirit of the Corps, was equal in importance to the necessity of identification. As new units were formed from the back-log of older and more experienced flyers, the history of past achievement was molded into the insignia design. The artists who created the symbols of personality and function admirably caught the authentic spirit and color that reflected the story "back of the story" of each organization.

In recognition of the importance of heraldry insignia, other branches of the service were not long in following the inspiring examples defined by air corps units. In addition to insignia in use by scouting, fighting, bombing and torpedo squadrons operating from air craft carriers, designs have been created for use by bombardment, pursuit, interceptor and observation squadrons, parachute battalions, field artillery, coast artillery, cavalry, infantry, submarine bases, mine divisions, anti-tank companies, reconnaissance squadrons, air bases, training schools and the marines. Combat insignia created by Walt Disney is in use by the China Air Service, the Royal Air Force, His Majesty's Ship Illustrious and, lately, the Free French Forces in North Africa. In fact groups carrying combat insignia reach into every part of the globe where anti-Axis forces of the United Nations are in operation.

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1. It may be presumed that the 44th Pursuit Squadron, now on strafing operations "somewhere in the Pacific" has taken for its own the figure of the pelican and his sharp-eyed little gunner. However, the insignia was first registered officially with the 37th Pursuit Squadron when it was engaged in peacetime maneuvers at Hamilton Field, California. The officer responsible for its inception is now with the 44th.

The pelican is a symbol of endurance and resourcefulness. The exercise of coordination of the squadron personnel is strongly suggested by this utilitarian bird. Within its spacious bill the housefly has adapted its talents to

the handling of a machine gun. This humble creature, whose habits are commonly domestic and unmilitary, lends a humorous touch to the completed picture, while the equation of contrast is both fanciful and impressive.



2. No less fearsome than the monstrous figure of War itself is the avenging emblem of Scouting Squadron Seventy-two, a composite creature of malevolence, intelligence and cunning. Seeking out and sucking the blood and strength from its loathsome adversary, it shows no mercy.

Withal their ability to fly surely and swiftly in the darkest night, the wings of the vampire bat are lined with a delicate network of nerves keyed to the reception of almost imperceptible sounds. These parts are indicative of the sensitive instruments of squadron equipment. The head and body of the figure combine the features of a man and a tiger, indicating a fusion of inventiveness and ferocity. The tail is pointed toward that portion of the globe occupied by the United States of America signifying protection, while the bomb in the upraised arm portends the destruction of the evil beast of war.

3. Employing the newest and most accurate of equipment for the exercise of bombing tactics, the personnel of Bombing Squadron Six have attained veteran rating in precision marksmanship and demolition effectiveness. To parallel the maneuverability and adroitness of this squadron, a more synonymous figure than the wild mountain ram could not have been chosen for its insignia. This grizzled warrior ranges the mountains and most dangerous precipices with swift and easy grace. The sheerest crags, the dizziest heights are the pedestals from which he can watch his flock with lofty dignity. Should an enemy menace their safety, he is quick to perceive and swift to descend to the attack. Thus does the squadron bearing his formidable image climb to almost inaccessible heights. Its range, like his, is far and wide. Vanquished is the foe who dares to challenge its explosive might.



4. Since the nation's first line of defense has taken to the air, much interest and speculation has developed in the type of plane in active and specific combat use. Many of the newer types have been assembled for highly specialized duties. Except for the "old line" squadrons of pursuit planes, few of them have undertaken the combined tactics of scouting, fighting, intercepting, and strafing.

The 62nd is one of this latter group. Its personnel is of the old school, hard-bitten, inflexible of purpose. Its insignia is most compatible with the dogged determination which motivates the group in combat. The fighter bull-dog clad in the athletic garb of a pugilist, packs a bolt of lightning in both gloves. The 62nd advances in like manner, quick to take advantage of the first opening, never retreating except to a more strategic line of attack. It asks no quarter and gives none.

5. To the lesser creatures of the jungle no sight is more terrifying than the flashing shape of the black panther hurtling himself with graceful force and perfect timing from the recess of shadowy ambush. This squadron of black panthers is all that its mascot evidences of virility, symmetry, and mettle. Springing skyward from their lair aboard the mother ship, these units range far and at extreme altitudes. For all their size and weight, their speed is breathtaking as they lunge suddenly downward, their sleek well-rounded bodies seeming to fit into grooves of light and shadow.

When on reconnaissance, the formation breaks into sets of three, melting into cloud banks on separate foray, stalking their prey with grim fortitude. Let him who hopes to escape the claws of the black panther squadron take care to conceal himself well!





6. The formidable ships of Torpedo Squadron Two are heavier than the run of the pack. But in spite of the extra weight they carry, so skillful are the men who operate them that they appear to be maneuverable in flight as are some of the lighter models. This squadron is armed with large bombs in addition to the "flying fish" of death which they can launch torpedo-like at the end of a dive.

The insignia for this unit is the bombman astride a torpedo. He represents a more modern interpretation of the original winged torpedo which the squadron formerly used. He seems not quite certain of his own destiny as he rides forward to a rendezvous with the enemy. The expression in his eye is one of forboding, for whatever may be waiting at the end of the road, he will be in at the finish like those of the squadron that bears his image.

7. The duties of neither the Dawn Patrol nor the Dusk Patrol have any counterpart in the habits and peregrinations of the ancient and extinct order of the Dodo bird, but Scouting Squadron Forty-two was not adverse to certifying a mascot from so distant a past. The designer of the insignia has given a grim but quizzical expression to the bird of its choice. In spite of his venerable ancestry, he has been modernized to some extent by the trappings of a mechanical age. A spyglass dangles at his throat to supplement his vision. By means of the modern headphones he receives directional information. For offensive purposes he holds in readiness within his claws a bomb. The lighted American-made stogie which he carries in his beak is to insure a smoke screen wherever camouflage might be necessary to the successful completion of his mission. Scouting Squadron Forty-Two has painted into his design the two-fold theme representing its own offensive and defensive capabilities.



8. The flight had come in just as darkness mantled the ship. As the officers and men raised their goblets in the posture of salute they knew that one of their number would not return. The tinkling sound of breaking glass punctuated the flight commander's grim observation, "The lady picks 'em tough."

"The Lady" was borrowed from Norse mythology by Torpedo Squadron Five. She was one of the Valkerie which the legend describes as riding white horses and armed with helmets, shields and spears. The Valkerie select only those worthy to die and carry them to Valhalla at the moment of their slaying. Wagner caught the true forcefulness of this theme of death in his opera,

"Die Walküre," and the spirit of it has been preserved in all its splendor by the corps. To the squadron "The Lady" is both their guidon and their nemesis, and like her they, too, are choosers of the slain.

9. Keener than any thrills experienced by the finished flyer are those of the flying cadet while his wings are in the process of sprouting. There is the excitement of his first solo flight including that view of the checkerboard below which he knows to be the "little red school house" of his ground school days. There he donned his first issue of denims, and later his flying togs. There he dipped into gear grease, or pored over charts and blueprints, learning the nomenclature of his flying ship.

So "Dusty," a Walt Disney creation, came into being. Seated on his cloud, his wings beginning to form, he is having a first glimpse of his own 45th Air Base Squadron. With the complacency of immaturity he seems quite unperturbed by the thought of a tomorrow. To whatever rendezvous the winged soldier may go, he will always carry the memory of Dusty's youthful eagerness in his heart.





10. From "Darken Ship" to daybreak the campfires on the huge mother ship have been out! But the tepees housing the silent blanketed scouter planes have long been astir. Even before the first pinkish gold of the morning light has flushed the eastern sky, their engines have been warmed up and ready for the take-off. The leaders swiftly leave the ramp in single file and nose up into the crisp currents of air awaiting the dawn patrol.

Long ago the first Americans, the Red Men, taught our pioneer woodsmen the art of reading signs and seeking out trails through a trackless wilderness. Today his spirit rides with Scouting Squadron Two, a significant heritage

for those intrepid stalkers of the skyways. His ancient profile guides their ships by signs and symbols which are all but invisible to the unlearned, for the dangers which beset them are no less real than those of an earlier day.

11. Hour after hour the huge "man-of-war" birds lead the way, circling through a vast expanse of mottled blue, zooming upward for a new descent, then returning to a pointed course, like drum majors of a flight parade. Far below, tiny elongated dots, like spears of over-ripe wheat, weave into the pattern of the dappled ocean carpet, as the battleships of the navy plow miniature furrows of white.

Tirelessly and without recorded motion the giant birds wing their way. A movement shuttle-wise; a quick descent in a curve that levels off to a guarded height over the scintillating line that marks the fleet. The eyes and ears of Scouting Squadron Five are ever alert, as though conscious of the very presence of the subject of its insignia, the imposing "man-of-war" bird, the sea-going bird that swoops near the water to snatch its prey, but never settles there to rest.



12. Winging in from the dusk patrol they come from a job well done. Crash barriers are up as one by one they come into the cable and taxi down the cleared ramp of the flight deck. The huge mother ship has taken in her brood with a sigh of content as her bow turns from up-wind into the swell again. The setting sun glows with a warm benediction as orange shafts of light steal into the broadside arcades of the ship's corridors.

When the last plane is in, a pilot glove smooths the shining side of the fuselage, patting the tie ends of the tarpaulin into place. Beneath the cover grimaces the grotesque mask, like the headdress of the high priest of an ancient Aztec tribe; the ears have resolved into wings of gold, the eyes are

hawk-like, with the nose and mouth made up of the figure of a descending bomb. On flight it rides with Scouting Squadron Six, officiating at all its rituals.

13. Ranging one of America's far-flung island outposts, the 23rd Pursuit Squadron patrols the air lanes over an oblong tract of nearly four thousand square miles of the mountainous jungles and sylvan countryside of a semi-tropical clime. Safeguarding the principles of democracy in an area influenced by America's Good Neighbors of the Western Hemisphere, this weather-beaten squadron of fighting men are veterans of the flying service.

The scarlet and orange plumes of the proud jungle parrot descend and rise with the moods and occupations of the squadron. Darting through the air with the native ferocity of its species, it employs a strange combination of fury and exhibitionism. When grooming itself for the "knock out" it guards well with the reckless abandon of the fighting cock, striking its opponent with lightning force and unerring aim.





- 14.** "The Greeks had a word for it." And so the members of the intrepid Bombing Squadron Two borrowed the "word" literally from the translation recorded by Greek mythology, that is, "First to attack." The Greek inscription was incorporated with the design of the winged stallion, Pegasus, who was ridden by Bellerophon. The story tells that he succeeded in descending upon and striking off the three heads of Chimero upon each of three successive attacks.

The ability of the squadron to attack suddenly and swiftly from great heights is certified effectively by the sole mission to which it has been assigned; to carry the offensive without quarter and to strike whenever and wherever the enemy appears. Working to and from the decks of aircraft carrier, this squadron has a wide latitude and may move into terrific demolition operations wherever the fleet may go.

- 15.** The mischievous and altogether complacent "Felix" created by Pat Sullivan and endeared to the hearts of fun-loving America has joined the armed forces. Since the malevolent and unprovoked attack of December 7, 1941, on our beloved land, this capricious little fellow has turned grim and war-like without losing his typically American sense of humor. Many of those who followed the antics of Felix in childhood were among the ones to fall at Pearl Harbor, but there are many more who will rise to avenge them.

Originally he had been adopted by Fighting Squadron Three when its primary mission had been that of bombing. Today he is slightly out of character with his bomb held at arm's length to indicate the squadron's chief function, for the men who call him their mascot have been assigned to more specific fighting tactics. But he will ride with them, come what may. They would not have it otherwise.



- 16.** Thunder in the West. Dark clouds gather on the horizon. A bolt of lightning sets the sea afire; an ominous quiet before the rumbling of the God Thor shakes the heavens. Out of the background of the approaching storm rushes the V formation of Fighting Squadron Seventy-one. Geared to fight freely and ferociously, but more formidable and heavier than faster fighters its ships peel off singly and descend to the attack with bombs "ready."

With them rides the God of War, spike-studded mace lifted for the blow. His body, ponderous and thick set as a fighter, is balanced with moving muscles, supple and irresistible and giving the illusion of rhythm and agility. A winged helmet adorns the head; aviator's goggles providing the touch of modern application to his mission. Terrifying and swift of action, there is little more to be said of the synonymous qualities of the combat unit which moves over to give him seat.

- 17.** The eyes and ears of the army and navy are once more policing the highways of the air. Brigands are loose again and the jewels of freedom are being looted. The utmost of versatility must be employed so that operation and mobility will insure the greatest effectiveness for both defense and offense. On the fringe of white-tufted clouds silver specks are drifting about, serenely watchful.

To this unit, the 15th Observation Squadron, Walt Disney has rendered the humorous touch which is part of the creed of every fighting man. Seated astride the box containing the unerring sight sense of the camera, Johnny Bug is scanning with his binoculars the portentous spectacle before him. With remarkable ambidexterity he employs his several forearms. His observations are receiving immediate tabulation on his report sheet to augment the images which will soon be developed in the dark room of his tactical base.





18. Like the shadow of a solitary cloud on the earth's floor, the helmeted figure of the flying squirrel glides gracefully over the palm-studded Florida countryside. His forelegs outstretched in the rigid posture of the dive, his figure casts a simulated airplane shadow on the ground. Goggles askew, with the confidence of one whose eyes have become accustomed to the sting of forced currents of air, he emulates the ease and simplicity with which the finished flyer maneuvers his ship through the trackless spaces of the sky. The falling leaf, the barrel roll, the inside and outside loop, and all the intricate strategy of attack and escape seem fully within his control. Nimble and fleet, he is derisive of danger. Now he awaits the exhilarating and fateful moment of further assignment from his Jacksonville Air Station base to a combat unit of the American armed forces.

19. Being "born to the purple" is not more of social posture than it is that of military consequence. All in the service of the corps are without benefit of social plane, but are leveled off to a common rank of one purpose, one ideal and one objective. Whatever he may acquire of aristocracy is attained, not inherited; a rank at which he arrives through his own perseverance and ingenuity.

One day in June, 1927, a member of that veteran pilot's unit known as "The Fighting One" reported for duty wearing a battered top hat. For some time dissatisfaction with their fighting eagle insignia had been manifest. It was on this occasion that the idea for the new insignia was born, and the group became the "High Hats" on the adoption of their new emblem. Changes in designation to that of its present, Scouting Squadron Forty-One, failed to wrest from it the high hat insignia.



20. Sweat and grime had caked up where the goggle rims had held tight to the skin. A pair of eyes, incandescent in their blueness, smiled without effort. "Sure thing! We run our own navy." He spoke for the rest of the pilots who had gathered around. Primarily this outfit, Fighting Squadron Two, the only one of its kind in America's air constabulary, was composed of and manned by enlisted personnel. They were tough and smart, these "non-coms." They lived well by their traditions.

"Up and at 'em" was their battle cry as well as their interpretation of the Latin, "Adorimini" emblazoned on the shield of their insignia. The men of Caesar had used it lustily but with no more significance. The severity of the conventional shield is broken by the chevron of a chief petty officer against a canton of dark blue. Dignity is achieved by the use of an American eagle atop the chevron.

21. The time for "cleaning house" and ridding a freedom loving world of the vermin that swarmed over Pearl Harbor will soon be at hand. Insect exterminator of a special brand is needed to dig out the termites that have been feeding unseen at the foundations of our treasured institutions. Fighting Squadron Seventy-Two has indicated that it knows how to do the job and explains its insignia, the blue burglar wasp, thusly:

This insect is typically a house-breaker, but with good intent. It attacks the home only of its sworn natural enemy, a spider known as the yellow-legged mud dauber. He waits until the spider has built his cell and stocked it with food and progeny and sealed it. Then the wasp breaks in, cleans the nest of food and young spiders, and lays a fertile egg of its own for good measure before resealing the cell in its own awkward but very effective manner.





22. With bombs over the Philippines, Hawaii, Malaya, and who knows how soon, over our own homeland, a new chapter of heroism and courage and sacrifice is being written into history by the thin line of wings in the heavens. There are none more capable to hold the pen or guide its course than the indomitable men of the "Fighting Six." Moving lights across the darkest curtain of night, fleeting specks of silver in the day's bright glow, they travel in a blaze of fiery speed that strikes magnificent terror to the hearts of all who have failed to reckon with such an adversary.

Like the tail of a comet the squadron sears a pathway through the sky, as though the main purpose of its existence was to emulate the trade-mark of

its insignia. Against a field of white stars set in the blue, the slogan "FIGHTING SIX" stands out with the same boldness of intent as the men within the ships.

23. "Pilots, man your planes!" The deck crew stands clear of the propellers. In the nebulous light of a new dawn, tiny strings of flame leap out like purple wind-blown plumes. Signals from afar have stirred the deck to action. The dragon of destruction is on the loose. Torpedo Squadron Three is in the air. The last to leave the ship has joined the flight. Only the dull and diminishing throb of unisoned motors indicates the direction they have taken. Now it fades into a whispered prelude of things to come.

Like an avenging spirit, the figure of a flying dragon, breathing fire and entwined about a bomb on its mission of destruction, the insignia rides too to meet the danger yet unseen. Bulk looms below, shadows deploy, and Torpedo Squadron Three unlimbers for the fray. Far from the mother ship a burst of flame lights up the sea. The squadron will soon be coming home.



24. Fast on the heels of an adversary who refused to stand his ground, the motors of Scouting Squadron Seventy-One strum an accompaniment to a high-voiced wind veering slightly to an angular course. Communication has now been established, and the flight climbs to a new altitude. The quarry is far below. Interceptors make contact. The scene might be that of a lazy summer afternoon filled with tiny flies moving about in disjointed occupation. Wisps of smoke dart out and twist downward like small inverted water-spouts.

Now is the moment for Scouting Squadron Seventy-One to strike. Like the golden-headed eagle emblazoned on the flint arrowhead of its insignia, the beaks of the ships come down, points foremost. The eagle is noted for its size and strength, for its keenness of vision, for flint-like striking power.

25. In the year 1929 the historic cruise of Fighting Squadron Forty-Two to Honolulu was made under quite different conditions from that of the cruise of 1941-42. Then all was peaceful, and there was no hint of the treachery lurking along the backwash of the courageous band of path-finders who linked the mainland by air with the island outposts of the Pacific.

The origin of the insignia for this group goes back more than twelve years to an incident of the flight when the squadron was assigned to sea going duty. At that time their planes were modified to amphibian craft, and the huge birds were able to walk on the water. Busy making tracks of foam and spray the black duck goes about its business with helmet and goggles. With the aid of pontoons and wheels it is taking the water, literally, in its stride. Without boots, even a duck would not venture so far seaward.



★ It is to be recounted that whereas several hundred Combat Insignia exist in the private collection of Hearst Publications, Inc., public demand has placed emphasis on the Disney-produced emblems. These will be released nearly as rapidly as their inception—while they are yet “news.”

Although reports indicate a veritable deluge of requests for insignia received at the Walt Disney Studios from organizations seeking the whimsical interpretations and military functions, the first, an isolated request, and the one which started “the rain,” arrived from Cadet Stanley in June of 1939, who was then stationed with the “Fighting Seven” squadron of the new navy carrier U.S.S. Wasp at San Diego, California.

Then, in March 1940, request Number Two came from Lieutenant E. S. Caldwell of the office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington. The first American motor torpedo boats, known as the “mosquito fleet,” were in need of insignia. The request was honored, gratuitously, as has since been the custom, and a nasty looking mosquito riding on a torpedo soon adorned the hull of each of the tiny craft. One of these stung the Japanese Fleet as it rode off Formosa in the early weeks of the war following the attack on Pearl Harbor and buzzed away unscathed leaving destruction and consternation in its wake.

Since Lieutenant Caldwell’s request, others have followed from units of every arm of the service, and the resulting insignia are joining the War Library Collection in an ever increasing flow. When peace has once more returned to lands whose people have been forced to point the sword at a God-effacing, civilization-destroying and murderous foe, history will have its recording of the valiant and thrilling deeds of those who carried the Combat Insignia into new halls of fame. The story of each will be told from the day “way back” when the pilot said, expressively, as the Flight Commander signalled to man the ship, “I’m going up in my flying coffin” to the day when the strong steady throb of motors within the hulls of staunch sleek planes intone the chant of the pilot, “Let’s up and at ‘em.”



The flying ships of the United States Army and Navy today, and tomorrow, are, and will be the products of nearly twenty-five years of commercial and military pioneering. They excel in most departments over other planes of similar type. Each motor; each ship body, is the brain and brawn and skill of master craftsmen. It is fitting, therefore, that the tradition of each element of organization be raised everlastingly in the effigy of its Combat Insignia, to the glory and color and spirit of the corps.

To quote from an editorial recently published in the Los Angeles Examiner:

“Out of the skies America is raining death to the Japs via big bombers and fighter planes. Dive bombers, torpedo-carrying planes, four-motored fortresses and other types of United States warplanes are daily testifying to the ability of the American airforce.

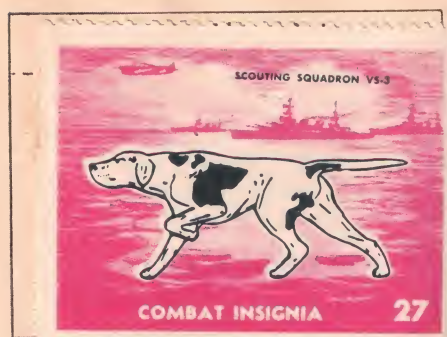
“Each American fighting ship over the Philippines and Malaya carries its own official insignia on the fuselage, symbolizing by emblem the spirit of the squadron. With the hearts of the nation beating for our boys ‘over there’ and everyone eager for news of the great victories of not only our Navy but the airforce as well, the Examiner believes that every citizen will greatly treasure a set of the official combat insignia that are actually in use on our battle planes. A complete collection will make a valuable memento in the years to come.”

“The mills of the gods grind slowly; but they grind exceeding well.” America; complacent, fun-loving, peace-loving America has girded itself for the grim fray. All are united. All are determined that the guilty shall be punished. Let the world take note. The might of America is marching today—as it has marched before; in the Spirit of the Corps.



26. With those who join hands and forces in the spirit of “comrades-at-arms,” making second in importance any variance of nativity or temperament, goes something of the histrionic and the bizarre. The hearts of freedom loving people applaud the daring exploits of the Free French and Dutch forces, cut away from the homelands they cherished.

Another partnership came into being shortly after the Nazi hordes first swept over Europe. The eagerness of American volunteer pilots to participate in the defense activities of Great Britain resulted in the formation of the Eagle Squadron. Walt Disney artists were quick to chronicle the significance of this combat union with an American Eagle “on guard.” Fiercely he advances to contest the fouling tactics of a barbarous and unsportsmanlike adversary, as he moves in to the attack with his English “comrade-at-arms.”



27. The noonday sun hangs overhead like a red paper balloon propelled by candle-heated air. Mists drive in from the southwest in thin skirmish lines that sting uncovered skin with each sudden rush of gray dampness. "Flight quarters," commands the stern voice of the loudspeaker! Men in oilskins overflow the decks. The gray hulks of destroyer escorts loom sharply through broken swirls of mist.

Contact with the fleet. Enemy in the offing. As the last ship of Scouting Squadron Three vaults from the ramp and roars upward to join the flight a single blue battle light glows momentarily. A side wash of white spray leaps against the bow of the carrier, spewing the front ramparts with folds of sheer

lace. The "pointer" insignia rides hard ahead on the fuselage of each ship, straining forward, nose to the scent and nerves taut. Guns from our distant fleet fire the sky. The Pointers have flushed their quarry.

28. Six came over that afternoon with a swarming escort of overgrown flies when Fighting Squadron Forty-One went up to meet them. They were huge dragon-like creatures, and their air-born eggs had hatched out in a holocaust of thunder and forked flames and dense clouds of dirt and smoke, where once had been gardens and homes and singing children. Sweeping upward and under the bellies, the leaders ripped them apart as puffs of white and black from ground batteries filled the air.

Diving and circling, the charge of the escort came down; fierce and ruthless like wild boars at bay, the ships of the squadron met their surge. Widening spirals of descending smudge marked the spots of attack where the Fighting Forty-First doled out. It was the fulfillment of the promise of the boar's head cresting a shield of navy blue split by a bolt of red lightning.



29. Playing "cops and robbers" seems a long way back down the years. But for the pilots of today it is hardly more than yesterday. Now the game has become a grim business in fact.

As the swank 56th Pursuit Squadron takes to the air it seems well fitted for the task at hand. Unlike its more streamlined comrades of the armed sky forces, it is not equipped for quick precision fighting. When the thief comes at night, it is not found wanting. Its ships are deep-chested, like the cop on the beat, sturdy, practical and reliable. Created as strictly an interceptor unit, it patrols the streets of the milky way. A Walt Disney artist caught the reflection of its spirit when he designed for its insignia a belligerent police-

man bird. The alert look in its eye betokens a situation well in hand, while the club swinging at cord suggests a useful and effective instrument of interception.

30. More power to its wings—power to climb swiftly, to carry its load at great heights—power to dive lustily and sustainingly with all of its falling weight, and then deliver. The wings of Bombing Squadron Five must be built for power and more power.

In action it is the living effigy of its own grotesque insignia. Pointed for limbo, its bombs at "ready," a satirical smile seems to gleam beneath the winged mask of Satan. Helmeted and goggled, it rides on a flaming ball of fire. The Japanese fleet knows its import. It has felt its impact and will feel it again and again until the seas have been rid of the lice that have too long profaned clean flesh. A dark bullet-like shape moving through space, auguring the swan song of the foe in the high sounding rush of the wind. A flash of light where the bomb has crashed. Lest we forget Pearl Harbor.





31. The spirit of the corps has again echoed the big throated guns of the Ships at Sea. Puerto Rico again sends its voice from afar to the creative ingenuity of Walt Disney, this time from the officers and men of the 38th Bombardment Group. Another unit has been formed. American men—fighting men of youth, vigor, and vision make up the back log of this new creed of combat. They must have a hall-mark that will denote fast moving essence, one that will typify the striking power of an American Interceptor Command, with "lots of speed, fight, and life in it."

So the new ships start off to battle with a ferocious fighting eagle. It wheels through the air in the wake of one lightning bolt, hard-gripping another, poised for the kill. The spirit of the old corps is the spirit of the new. As the eagle strikes, the bombers follow through in the wake of his aim. America is alive to its trust.

32. For this Torpedo Squadron Six, the take-off from the mother ship is not like that of the gay-hearted cavaliers who belong to the scout and fighter units. It is more routined with specialized technique. The ships are heavy and portly, for they must bear the weight of pilot, navigator, and gunner, as well as the ponderous steel porpoises of destruction.

The mammoth birds of this fleet roll to the edge of the ramp and take off cleanly, rising in majestic flight in the manner of the great white albatross after which the insignia has been patterned. The wings of their albatross form a "V" with a "T" formed in the background by a waterspout. The "6" is formed by the fish held firmly in the bird's beak. Like the sea bird of its insignia, the squadron is capable of prolonged flight over a large expanse of ocean and to a great distance from its base.



33. "Looking for a fight" is the motto of these three squadrons who have singularly banded together for inspirational allegiance. Theirs is the mien of the three swashbuckling buccaneers; competitive in spirit, unified in objective, sportsman-like in conduct, ferocious and indomitable in combat.

"Cocks-of-the-walk" in their own right, this intrepid group of fighting pursuit squadrons have happily chosen the symbol of their insignia to be the cocky rooster of the barnyard variety. Walt Disney artists have done the rest. Here is a rooster out for a good fight. With gloved wings extended, he is in his glory at the prospect of engaging a worthy adversary. To preclude the possibility of mistaken identity, while pursuing their "one-for-all" and "all-for-one" activities, each squadron has clothed the rooster in a sweater of individual color.

34. Nearly twenty-five years ago, an American Expeditionary Force set out across the broad Atlantic to safeguard the American way of life. As the conflict raged below, pioneer airmen carried the conflict into the skies with their flimsy wire and canvas craft. These were the forerunners of today's fleet armada.

American flyers were the first of these who rendered heroic service with the Lafayette Esquadille. From this was formed an all-American unit, the 103rd Aero Squadron, of which the present 94th Pursuit Squadron is a direct descendant. As evidence of its survival it retained the original Indian Head insignia, emblazoned on the flint stone head of an arrow finding its mark. The ancient Red Man's sign of the swastika (good luck) forms a part of the headdress as though to emphasize the reversed and distorted version adopted by the Nazi brigands and their disreputable sycophants.





35. An expanding army continually makes demands upon its organizing officers. New units must be formed and a sufficient number of the older men must be interspersed with the new as check reins, guide posts, and swivel points for the raw recruits.

It was not the same with the 45th Pursuit Squadron, for the men of this group were each fliers of experience, long skilled in all fields of aeronautics. But the new organization was without tradition. They decided to pull off the swaddling clothes and dress the "baby" squadron in long pants. Their choice fell to a romantic character of American literature, for they appropriated Walt Disney's baby Hiawatha from the comic strip and enlisted him as personnel. He rides the fuselage of their dynamic ships with tomahawk and bow and arrow in hand, the ever abiding spirit of their audacity and prowess.

36. The world will always listen with respect and awe as the story is told and retold of the Marines at Wake Island, Midway, Guam, or wherever they may have "the situation well in hand." Land, sea, and air soldiers, these three-in-one lovable leathernecks of Uncle Sam will always be found where the going is the toughest and the best is like the worst.

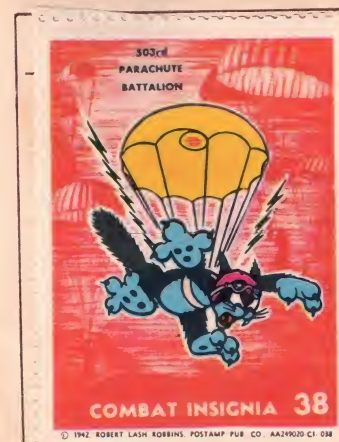
The official sobriquet of "Devil Dogs" was bestowed upon them when they, as an organization, selected the English bulldog for their mascot. It is not surprising then that when Marine Fighting Squadron 221, was formed in the summer of 1941, Walt Disney should have been requested to create an appropriate insignia. The "on guard" spirit was exemplified, as a result, in the person of the devil dog, formidably equipped with a machine gun, and seated on a cloud in an attitude of "devil take care!"



37. Behind the lines, in front of the lines, and over the lines, battle strategies are designed and carried out on the basis of information secured pertaining to the strength or weakness of movements of the enemy. Detailed information from photographic observations are vital and perilous to procure. Equipped for this assignment and proficient in its function is the Fourth Photographic Squadron. Reconnaissance and map making is its forte, for upon its personnel depends the success of many an aerial operation. It must range the skies singly or in flight formation without escort, deploying as scouter units, or employing fighter tactics when called upon to do so. Its symbol is that of a ferocious fighting eagle, grasping in its talons the tool of its trade, a camera, its own peculiar weapon of destruction. In its wake, symbolic as the theme may be, it creates its own star-studded trail.

38. Distant thunder in the high heavens—the thunder of numberless motors sound as huge planes sweep like a cloud of locusts across the indigo vaults of space. On they come, as the lowering storm gathers for the spring to earth. Suddenly white dots fleck the sky, like pin pricks of light through a vast canopy of blue. More and more, then myriads more. Larger they grow, blotting from view the smaller dots above. Dark spots show against the white; each spot a man, each man a canopied arsenal.

"Geronimo!" they shout as the men of the parachute battalions leap from their planes. This was their time-honored battle cry. But those of the 503rd have digressed from the insignia of the Indian thunder bird which was in common use by other parachute battalions. Instead, their emblem is the figure of a wild cat hurtling through the air, claws outspread in the ferocious attitude of impending attack.





That started it. Walt Disney finished it. The 75th Squadron received its new citation of Carrie Parrot perched confidently astride a torpedo on the loose, with telescope in hand, guiding its course.

40. Proud of its brood, the U.S.S. Saratoga, aircraft carrier utility unit of the fleet, carves a white course between mountains of foam-blown waves. The pride of the service is upon her. In her hold and nestled closely along her terraced decks, hooded war birds stand; some with wings outspread, others with wings folded back in pregnant repose.

Flight Commander Jones stood with arms at ease against his tunic, the wind-blown cape forming nice lines at his shoulders. His gaze was seaward.

"It came about like this," he said. "The old Saratoga was doing battle on Lake Champlain. During heavy gunfire the steward's pen of pet chickens was damaged, and a cock, as cool as you please, flew into the rigging and crowed. 'Twas then the tide of battle turned. So the descendants of that old ship Saratoga carry the crowing cock insignia. Guess it's good luck."



41. The art of moon jumping heretofore associated exclusively with the cow of nursery rhyme fame, has lately been challenged by the new Walt Disney prodigy, the boxing kangaroo.

Although the sphere of his operation is somewhat imaginary in the insignia drawing, his performance in the prize ring is an actuality, for few men have been able to stand up to the "wallop" which is packed by a trained kangaroo. Indeed, a more appropriate subject could hardly have been chosen to represent a fighting unit. There is none more fitted than he to pace the speed of the squadron ships on patrol, for his athletic prowess is not confined

to the boxing ring. In the interest of speed his strong hind legs can carry him over the ground with the driving force of giant pistons. Who is there to gainsay his hurdling the moon if it be in the prosecution of a military assignment?

42. In the selection of the ant for their patron and co-patriot, the 79th Bombardment Squadron have chosen one of the smallest but most intelligent and busy creatures of the animal kingdom. And they have chosen him with shrewd foresight, for a squadron of this calibre plays host to the enemy in much the same manner as a colony of ants might entertain an itinerant wasp.

Lighter and faster than any of its allied group, the eye finds difficulty in following the sky trail of this bolt driven unit. Their mascot is a particularly ferocious warrior when armed with a spear and transfixed by the ions of electrical force. Since his assignment to military duty he will henceforth be expected to raise havoc with the enemy in the same degree that he tormented Donald Duck and Pluto in the Walt Disney feature. His is a man-sized job assigned to an insect of remarkable sagacity.





43. History will long cherish and often recall the deeds of valor, of sacrifice and unselfish devotion to duty of America's fighting men. The pioneers of winged combat, the aces of the First World War will live forever in the niches which have been of their own making. The poppies that grow in the fields of Flanders will bloom again in scarlet tribute.

Quentin Roosevelt, and others of the dim past are kept alive in memory by the living presence of Eddie Rickenbacher and others like him. The Lafayette Esquadrille first gave them place and room in which to develop. Aero squadrons under Americans' command sprang up, and out of these came Rickenbacher's own, the 94th. When Uncle Sam threw his hat into the ring, the 94th immortalized the gesture, and significantly placed the insignia on the ships of the squadron. It will long live in the Hall of Fame as an inspiration to the "Kellys" of today.

44. The life that man leads forms the pattern of his deeds. The rule holds fast in that our country's choice of the best to serve, serve well. From the barrier to the finish line, it is the thoroughbred all the way.

With the sprouting of new wings in every section of the nation, and the formation of new combat units, the supremacy of fitness becomes ever more apparent. Thoroughbreds! So thought the Disney studios when the design was conceived for the Sixteenth Wing of the Forty-Sixth Bombardment Group. "Charlie" Horse, munching the luscious spears of blue grass, was not found wanting when the call to duty came. Helmeted and ready for the fray, there is the glint of new fire in his one unwinking eye; the tensing of a nostril gives testimony of a reinvigorated heart. He is entered in a new kind of race where the stamina of the thoroughbred will tell.



45. Bounding up from the flight deck, one by one the planes of Fighting Squadron Five roar into formation, like wild geese in flight. Far below, the tennis court deck of the mother ship recedes from view. To the westward the crescendo of humming motors discloses the stealthy approach of a lurking foe.

Suddenly, from the lobe of a mackerel sky the ships of the Fighting Five rain down. Yellow, five-pointed stars gleam on the sun-lighted fuselages, silhouetting the outstretched wings and extended claws of as many descending American eagles. "The Striking Eagles" have struck again with all the fury of their breed, tracer bullets streaming ahead into the sides of the oncoming scourge. The siren wail of falling things gives evidence of the toll, as black fire-bitten smoke marks the trail of the vanquished.

46. To many of the fighting units of American patriots, the fortunes of war do not bring fame, but only a temporary oblivion. The changes in their personal fortune are often immediate and poignant, and it is not always given us to know where they may be, nor what specific trials they now encounter. The 108th Observation Squadron, which carries the mark of the State of Illinois, is one of these.

The cardinal bird, which is officially recognized by that State, was the unanimous choice of the squadron. And so it was incorporated into the design in all of its stately mien and color, interpreted by Walt Disney artists. Regal in its polychrome blending of yellows and whites against the sharp contrast of cardinal red, it was pridefully acclaimed by the personnel. Perched on a cloud and equipped with a spyglass, he rides now where only the gods can know.





47. A flop-eared Elephant who learns to fly. Speechless, but explosive with antics that crease the ribs of folks who otherwise would not hazard an ounce of audible mirth—that is “Dumbo.” For he “sails through the air with the greatest of ease.”

The request of Elliott Roosevelt, Captain in the U. S. Army Air Corps attached to the Sixth Reconnaissance Squadron, brought Walt Disney's “Dumbo” into his new role with that organization. Not unfamiliar with the mechanics of air travel, he soon was at home with the flight. He can descend for closer scrutiny when the need arises, for he is never without the extended spyglass which he holds in the awkward embrace of his tiny trunk. He has

acquired the flying togs of the seasoned veteran pilot, and greater enterprise may soon be recorded of this newest recruit from the animated “stills” of filmland.

48. The water-walkers of the naval air forces of the United States are busily treading the placid surf lines along the sanded shores of Pensacola. Streaking in from points beyond the ocean's curve, they test their booted gear in the spanking spray and then skid up anew and soar away, as though the lust for duty has called them back to sea again. With packs of sea wolves on the loose, theirs is a mission never ended. A gray shadow beneath the turquoise water marks the place of a lurking vandal; the place which will presently be its burial ground. For the eyes of the navy never sleep.

The insignia of the paddling duck symbolizes the varied duties of aqua-craft, while on off-shore patrol. Their ability to cruise for great distances makes the undertaking of rescue work as well as the detection of submarines, not the least of their many assignments.



49. Flying the no-man's-land of the air is by no means the full complement of a bombing squadron's task. Much of the time is spent by the ground crew and flying personnel in the “ready rooms.” Pilots and gunners and bombardiers consult the ruled blackboard at stated intervals and study the simulated tactics if not the actual combat data. Each becomes a flight commander in his own right.

To relieve the sometimes monotonous and usually grim business of war, a touch of humor is not unwelcome to any corps. A mother kangaroo supplies the whimsy for the insignia of the 46th Bombardment Group. The Disney artists have placed her on a cloud where she coquettishly makes use of her

handy pouch as a carrier place for bombs. To further demonstrate her worth, she plucks them out at will, and deftly drops them over the edge and into space, hoping they will drift where they will do the most good.

50. Since the lethargy of Americans has been blown to bits by the blasts at Pearl Harbor, a new union of purpose and ideals has begun to grow. Men and women in all walks of life within the coastal extremities of our broad land, from the woodland lakes of the north to the swamps of Mississippi, have joined hands and forces. Even from the slimy reaches of a stagnant pool, the creeping, tail-lashing crocodile has come clamoring for recognition and the chance to do his part. Though in reality he is only a character from that half-world of dreams and fancy, he is imposing enough to decorate any plane.

In the final analysis, he is a sort of third cousin to the doughty dancing crocodiles who disported themselves in Walt Disney's “Fantasia.” Now he makes the music to which others dance.

